

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

‘AN INSECURE TIME’



JOHN MCCOY — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Carmen Cortez and her daughter Ashley Elizarraras and Jose Anguiano join in a prayer outside Cortez’s Santiago Estates home in Sylmar. Cortez returned to the house to find that it had been saved thanks to Anguiano alerting a firefighter about embers.

Day 4: Crews advance on some of the blazes, but fortunes, like the winds, could shift

By Kevin Modesti
kmodesti@scng.com
@KevinModesti on Twitter

It was a dreadful day in Southern California. It was a better day in Southern California.

While dozens of people confronted the loss of homes, tens of thousands remained under evacuation orders and more than 5,000 tired firefighters continued to battle wildfires in Southern California on Thursday, many residents breathed sighs of relief that the fires in Los Angeles and Ventura counties were increasingly contained and no new ones had taken hold.

Residents went to bed Wednesday fearful that Thursday would be the worst of the four days of conflagration, with Santa Ana winds forecast to gust up to 90 mph in some places overnight. But it turned into a day for some to take a deep — and less smoky — breath. **WILDFIRES » PAGE 6**



A firefighter looks for hot spots at the Santiago Estates housing tract in Sylmar.

FIRES BY THE NUMBERS

CREEK FIRE

Sylmar area
15,323 acres
20 percent contained

RYE FIRE

Santa Clarita area
7,000 acres
15 percent contained

SKIRBALL FIRE

Near Sepulveda Pass
475 acres
30 percent contained

THOMAS FIRE

Ventura County
96,000 acres
5 percent contained

FOR MORE FIRE COVERAGE,
SEE NEWS 4-7

Taxes: Proposed reform legislation would eliminate the deduction for wildfire losses

By Martin Wisckol
mwisckol@scng.com
@MartinWisckol on Twitter

Tax-reform plans before Congress would limit or eliminate the natural-disaster deduction, meaning future victims of wildfires like the ones raging throughout Southern California could no longer deduct losses of property that is uninsured or underinsured.

The House and Senate proposals, which are in the process of being reconciled, would not affect natural-disaster deductions filed for the 2017 tax year.

Democrats have been most vocal in maintaining the natural-disaster deduction after this year. California Republicans in Congress also have expressed a desire to help victims of wildfires, but not necessarily by continuing existing provisions.

Rep. Mimi Walters, R-Laguna Beach, is sponsoring a bipartisan bill that **TAXES » PAGE 6**

CONGRESS

Franken to resign, points to tolerance of Trump

Departure prompts maneuvering for Democrat’s Senate seat

By Alan Fram
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON » Sen. Al Franken, a rising political star only weeks ago, reluctantly announced

Thursday he’s resigning from Congress, succumbing to a torrent of sexual harassment allegations and evaporating support from fellow Democrats. But he fired a defiant parting shot

at President Donald Trump and other Republicans he said have survived much worse accusations. “I of all people am aware that there is some irony in the fact that I am leaving while a man who

FRANKEN » PAGE 9

TOP WORKPLACES



140 local businesses honored during gala

What does it take to be a top workplace in Orange County? The companies that embody those examples were among 140 honored Thursday night by The Orange County Register at its 10th annual Top Workplaces gala.

Inside today’s edition, subscribers will find a special section highlighting the top firms. In Business, columnist Jonathan Lansner warns CEOs to be mindful of the wisdom employees bring to the table. **BUSINESS ON NEWS 14**

CONGRESS

Lawmakers agree on funding, at least through Dec. 22

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Former Olympic team doctor sentenced to 60 years in prison

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WEATHER

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CHARITY

Tobacco heir might be SoCal’s biggest Santa

By Keith Sharon
ksharon@scng.com
@KeithSharonOC on Twitter

His father gasped. That is one of his few memories of his father — a 64-year-old man who couldn’t get out of bed, struggling with emphysema.

Patrick Reynolds was 15 at the time, and his father, R.J. Reynolds Jr., was the heir to a cigarette fortune. When his lungs gave out,

the elder Reynolds had a yacht, an island home, powerful connections, a penchant for Camels or Winstons (the best-sellers of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.) and no relationship with his son.

Ask Patrick today why he gets so excited around Christmas, and he’ll tell you about his absentee father and what tobacco took — despite all the riches — from his family.

REYNOLDS » PAGE 8



JEFF GRITCHEN — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Patrick Reynolds greets Santa Claus at a post office in Los Angeles on Tuesday. Reynolds’ Be An Elf program joins with the USPS’ Operation Santa to answer letters written by kids in need.

GIVE ME A CHANCE
...to dream in my own bed

28,000 Orange County children and their families often don’t know where they will sleep at night.
You can help open the door to stable housing in our community. Join us in our fight.



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